



Letharia vulpina (L.) Hue (1899): a new record to Periyar tiger reserve, Kerala

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General Note



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ABSTRACT

Letharia vulpine, a fruticose species of the family Parmeliaceae. Authors found it in the Thekkady range of Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala.

Keywords: *Letharia vulpina*, New Addition, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Forest

Forest play a vital role in the sustainability of the habitat and it is a highly complex and constantly changing environment made up of variety of living and non-living things. Among them, most of the species are not identified as per taxa, region and landscapes. Authors have visited a rich protected forest area (Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala) of Western Ghats, India and found an interesting species of lichen in the tourism zone. As per the morphology and habitat it was great and was giving an untamed beauty to the area. After through consultation with the members of Periyar Tiger Reserve and Periyar Tiger Conservation Foundation (Ramesh Babu), the updated flora list of the locality documented by the said foundation, through literature, protologue and on critical studies, it has been confirmed as *Letharia vulpina*, a fruticose of family Parmeliaceae (Susanne et al., 2014).

Study area: Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) is the 10th reserve of India situated in Western Ghats of the country. Study area is located in the high ranges of the Kerala state in Idukki district and lies between 9° 17' 56.04" N - 9° 37' 10.02" N and 76° 56' 12.12" E - 77° 25' 5.5" E. it covers 925 Km² and enjoys the Precambrian Crystalline rocks. PTR forms about 10 % of total forest area of the Kerala state, India. It has four types of vegetation, Tropical evergreen, Semi-evergreen, Moist deciduous and Evergreen (Shukla and Babu, 2011; Mahanti et al., 2016a; Mahanti et al., 2016b).

Botany: The identified lichen was *Letharia vulpina* (L.) Hue. 1899; has vegetative fruticose body; branched; shrubby; greenish-yellowish colour; dry yellow colour when dried; globe; unshaped ball shaped (Figure 1).

Ecology: found in the trunk of tree; 5.6.5 feet height; sometimes on rock; moist deciduous forest.

Distribution: Pacific Northeast; Ponderosa Forest; India; Nepal; Columbia; Yellow Stone National Park etc; now in Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala (Hunn 1990; Geiser et al. 1997; Susanne et al. 2014; .

Specimen examined: INDIA, Kerala, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Thekedday range, on Bark, on rock, 08° 30' 35.20" N - 76° 53' 18.09" E, 899 m, Padma Mahanti, S. Kumar.

Medicinal values: Insectidal properties (Emsen et al. 2015).



Figure 1 Habitats and Vegetative body of *Latheria vulpine* (1-5); 4: dried, 5: semi dried

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